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ABSTRACT

This guide provides an approach for teachers of grades 4-5 to teach media literacy and promote an informed public conversation about the impact of violent imagery in our culture today. Five key goals govern the program: (1) to reduce exposure to media violence; (2) to change the impact of violent images that are seen; (3) to locate and explore alternatives to media that focus on violence to solve conflict; (4) to uncover and challenge the cultural, economic, and political supports for media violence; and (5) to introduce skills of media advocacy and organizing for change. The lessons in this guide include: (1) "What Are You Watching?" (2) What's Missing from Media Violence?" (3) "Why is Everyone Watching?" (4) "Violence Doesn't Solve Problems, It Causes Them" (5) "How Much Violence Do You Watch?" (6) "What's the Big Deal?" (7) "What Makes a 'True' Hero?" and (8) "Sharing What You have Learned." Seventeen reproducible worksheets accompany the lessons. (EH)

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ELEMENTARY

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Beyond Blame

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TEACHER'S GUIDE
&
WORKSHEET MASTERS

PLEASE NOTE:

In order to use this guide effectively. teachers and leaders need to first review the background resources in the Introduction/ Overview Package. This will provide fundamental information on the issues in the controversy over violence in the media, fully preparing you to conduct thought-provoking and successful *Beyond Blame* lessons.

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Beyond Blame

CHALLENGING VIOLENCE
IN THE MEDIA

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

CLASSES AND GROUPS
(Grades 4 and 5)

TEACHER'S GUIDE

B

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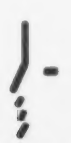

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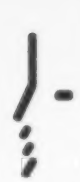

CENTER FOR MEDIA LITERACY

WHO WE ARE

The Center for Media Literacy is dedicated to a new vision of literacy for the 21st Century: the ability to *communicate* competently in all media, print and electronic, as well as to *access, analyze* and *evaluate* the powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary mass media culture. These skills of *media literacy* are essential for our future as individuals and as members of a democratic society.

Established in 1989 as an expansion of the acclaimed quarterly magazine, *Media&Values*, the Center now serves a growing membership network of parents, teachers, childcare providers, religious and community leaders. The Center is the largest producer and distributor of media literacy resources in North America.

OUR MISSION

We believe that mass media is the dominant influence in children's lives today. Our mission is to help children— and adults — prepare for living and learning in a global media culture by translating media literacy research and theory into practical information, training and educational tools for teachers and youth leaders, parents and caregivers of children.

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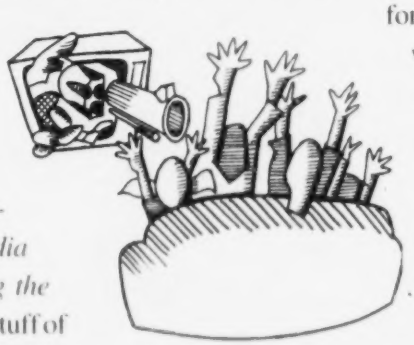
Media Literacy as Violence Prevention

Beyond the blame . . . beyond the debate . . . are human beings — children, young people and adults of all ages — who are daily bombarded with violent images from the media and popular culture.

The parameters of this problem are complex and interrelated.

There are First Amendment concerns, as well as public policies resulting from years of deregulation of the media industry and the erosion of the public interest standard in favor of marketplace forces. And as Walter Wink observes in the initial essay in *Media and Violence: Part One: Making the Connections*, violence is the very stuff of our fundamental mythologies, including the myth of the American West.



While Hollywood may feed these myths, Hollywood did not start them. Nor can Washington legislate them under the rug.

Violence cannot be sanitized out of our culture even if gruesome and gratuitous violence becomes more and more "politically incorrect" in popular entertainment.

There will still be violence in the media, as in life, because there is evil in the world and human nature has its shadow side. There is also grinding poverty and substance abuse and meaninglessness which create a seedbed for violence as a way for some to cope with injustice. Such violence will find its way into the news and storylines of both high art and popular culture.

Nevertheless, violence is a growing issue of public safety and a major health problem in urban cities and rural communities alike. Children are killing children. Crime is devastating neighborhoods. Violence and the fear of violence are strangling the human spirit. As we prepare to enter the 21st century, we must find workable solutions to reduce violence in our world and build structures for living and working in harmony with one another and with the earth itself.

We all recognize that media violence is not the sole cause of violence in society, but more and more, we're coming to understand that they do reinforce the myths and images, beliefs and attitudes that support a culture of violence.

Since the introduction of television in the 1950's, society has been engaged in a "circle of blame" about who's "responsible" for violence in media and popular culture. The truth is we all share responsibility for the cultural environment we live in, just as we're all responsible for the physical environment our children will inherit from us.

It's time to move beyond blame, to see media violence as a systemic issue in a contemporary society and to develop ways to challenge — and change — the violence, not just in our media, but in our culture and in our lives.

Our vision is broader than simply reducing media violence. We strive to create a world where our children can grow up safe, healthy and whole. ◆

Goals of the *Beyond Blame* Program

Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media provides a creative new framework and approach for breaking the cycle of blame and promoting an informed and rational public conversation about the impact of violent imagery in our culture today. In classes and courses, afterschool programs and parent workshops, individuals of all ages can learn important skills for reducing their exposure to media violence while gaining insight and motivation to challenge its growing presence in our media culture.

There *are* alternatives to media violence. And media literacy can help us find them. Five key goals run throughout the *Beyond Blame* program:

1. Reduce exposure to media violence.

The amount of violent imagery now prevalent in our culture is unprecedented in human history. Researcher George Gerbner notes that we are "awash in blood." Research indicates this has many serious impacts, not just on individuals, but on society as a whole. Helping parents, adults and young people become aware of the cumulative effects of violent imagery — and then how to reduce exposure — is a fundamental theme throughout the *Beyond Blame* program.

For example, Teen/Adult group sessions engage participants in "taking a stand" on media violence: what do they accept and what do they reject? For themselves? For children in their care? The lesson plans for children help them discover and "make the connections" between violence portrayed in the media and the many ways violence and aggressiveness are manifested in their classroom or on the playground, among friends and in their families.

Parents learn skills of media monitoring and how the ratings work so that they can better select age-appropriate entertainment for their children. Males, especially those in the sought after age-demographic 18-49, are challenged to examine their preference for "action-adventure," especially when children are present.

Media violence proliferates, in part, because it is profitable. Reducing exposure to media violence — child by child, teen by teen, family by family — is a fundamental first step in building a critical mass of public opinion that makes excessive media violence "politically incorrect" and ultimately, unprofitable.

2. Change the impact of violent images that *are* seen.

The growing availability of media literacy education does not excuse the storytellers of society from accepting their share of responsibility for the cultural climate in which our children are growing up. But there are ways to *deconstruct* and *decode* the techniques used to stage violent scenes so that they lose some of their glamour and appeal. It is important for children to learn early on the difference between reality and fantasy and to know how costumes and camera angles and special effects can fool or mesmerize them.

Another way to challenge violent scenes is to project real-life consequences onto media portrayals of violence. In Elementary sessions, young children begin to ask "who will be sad?" or "who will clean up the mess?" while middle school students more easily grasp the edited unreality of "reality" television. Parents learn new ways to see TV through children's eyes so they can better assess what their children do and do not comprehend and guide them accordingly.

Research shows that the critical skills embodied in media literacy learning can be taught and, through guided practice, can become everyday habits for both children and adults.

3. Locate and explore alternatives to media that focus on violence to solve conflict.

The issue of media violence is really one of storytelling. We all learn who we are, how to behave, what to believe through the stories of our culture. Who is telling stories to our children today? What has happened to our culture that violence has become a primary way we entertain ourselves?

Challenging violent role models created by Hollywood is a core theme that runs throughout the *Beyond Blame*

> Our vision must be to create a world where our children can grow up safe, healthy and whole.

program. Children learn to distinguish between "true" heroes and heroines and "fake" ones. Teens explore the meaning of courage in dramatic portrayals. Adults confront how standard plot formulas reinforce our cultural conditioning to resolve conflict through "fight or flight."

It's also important for all age groups to explore alternatives to violence both in entertainment and in life. Building on the ideas in Arthur Kanegis' "New Heroes for a New Age" in *Media and Violence: Part Two: Searching for Solutions*, children create new endings to scenes which commonly end in violence. Parents develop a pro-social checklist for choosing videos, movies and games for their children. Schools and daycare centers, libraries and families (grandparents, too) are encouraged to build collections of books and videos that provide positive role models to consciously counterbalance the actions and attitudes of violent "superheroes."

4. Uncover and challenge the cultural, economic and political supports for media violence.

Media literacy education empowers viewers to ask hard questions of themselves, of others and of society, to "make the connections" between what they see on the screen and what they experience at home, at work, at school. Media violence is not isolated from other social issues facing us today — drugs, domestic violence and child abuse, guns, unemployment, structures of dominance that alienate rich from poor.

Each guide contains a core session on the "Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence" which summarizes the psychological research to date and links the viewing of media violence to ways we act toward one another.

Further, *Beyond Blame* sessions on confronting the "Six Myths of Media Violence," on the news, the decline of sportmanship and the volatile messages that result from mixing sex and violence, provide opportunities for older teens, adults and parents to confront the larger system of violence that pervades our whole culture.

Without this wider perspective, efforts to reduce media violence on television, movies or video games will be as ineffective as bandaids on a broken leg.

5. Introduce skills of media advocacy and organizing for change.

In the United States and Canada, media literacy education incorporates and builds on a tradition of media activism and advocacy. Those who seek to right wrongs or protect the public interest have had many causes to support in recent decades as the powerful potential of mass media has become more and more beholden to vested economic interests.

Surely no social cause is more important now in the 1990's than challenging the media's contribution to our growing culture of violence.

But there is no one simple remedy. Like the environmental movement which incorporates a variety of activities from recycling pop cans to cleaning up toxic waste dumps, the "cultural environmental" movement must also develop multiple actions — some personal or local, others national or global. Like any social change effort, success will only come from collaborative efforts on many fronts for many years.

Beyond Blame provides a variety of tools and resources to help organize for change — from where and how to write letters to express your point of view to leveraging financial stockholdings for social responsibility by media corporations. There are dozens of "Action Projects to Pursue" throughout the guides. Even children learn to organize and communicate their point of view to local media owners, video-game manufacturers and their elected representatives.

The Time Has Come

For 40 years, the cycle of blame around media violence has left us powerless and paralyzed. The time has come to stop blaming and start building a movement for a caring culture. The lesson plans, video, audio and print resources in *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media* give you tools for the task. Use them well. And, "Never doubt," as Margaret Mead has said, "that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Core Principles of Media Literacy

Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media is based on the premise that viewers, readers and listeners of media can learn and grow in their understanding of how and why media function as they do.

It is a lifelong process but is especially important for children today whose formative years are increasingly influenced by television and popular culture.

Evolving from research over several decades by educators in Australia, England, Canada and the United States, media literacy is a growing academic discipline with five core principles. You'll find these principles embedded in each of the sessions in *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media.*

1. All media are constructions.

Media are carefully manufactured cultural products. They create an emotional experience that *looks* like reality, but of course is not — because it is all made up by one person — or many people — who select this picture and edit out those words or include this scene while another 20 versions land on the cutting room floor. Media are not "real" but they affect people in real ways because we take and make meaning for ourselves out of what we see, hear and read.

2. Media use unique "languages."

Media language is unique to each form of communication — whether newspapers, TV game shows or horror movies. The language works because it is used over and over as a shorthand for conveying intended meanings: scary music heightens fear, camera angles convey relationships, headlines signal significance. Understanding the grammar, syntax and metaphor system of media language heightens our appreciation and enjoyment of media experiences, as well as helps us to be less susceptible to manipulation.

The best way to understand how media is put together is to do just that. Media *production* and media *analysis* are the two sides of the media literacy coin.

3. Audiences "negotiate meaning."

No two people see the same movie or hear the same song on the radio; even parents and children do not see the same TV! Each reader or viewer uses prior knowledge and experience in the process of reading, watching or listening. Skillful readers and viewers examine different stylistic features of a media product and pay careful attention to the context in which the message occurs.

This concept turns the tables on the idea of TV viewers as just passive "couch potatoes." We may not be conscious of it but we are constantly trying to "make sense" of what we see, hear or read. The fundamental skills of media literacy allow us to be *conscious* and *deliberate* about what we experience and, more important, how we interpret media experiences in our lives.

4. Media have commercial interests.

Media are ad-driven businesses. Newspapers lay out ads on their pages first. The space remaining is devoted to news. Likewise, TV programs don't exist simply to entertain us. They are there to ensure that a certain number of viewers will be watching when a commercial comes on. Corporate sponsors pay TV stations based on the number of people they expect to be watching. But not just anybody will do. Advertisers want specific kinds of viewers (for example, children) who have the ability to spend their money on the advertisers' products (toys). TV programs are designed so that the right people will watch when the commercials come on.

Maybe it's not the way it ought to be — but, in truth, most media are provided to us, as researcher George Gerbner says, by private corporations with something to *sell* rather than by the family, church or school with something to *tell*.

5. Media have embedded values.

Media, by their very nature *being* constructed, carry a subtext of who and what is important — at least to the person or persons doing the constructing. There are no

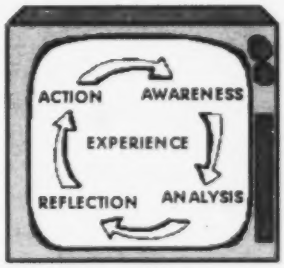
Media Literacy is the ability to communicate competently in all media, print and electronic, as well as to access, understand and evaluate the powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary media culture.

value-free media and never will be. This presents a challenge for all of us to learn to "read" the media critically in order to uncover the value messages that are embedded in them. Only then can we judge whether to accept or reject these messages as we negotiate our way each day through our mediated environment.

An Active Learning Model

The overall goal of *Beyond Blame* is to break the cycle of blame about violence in the media by engaging millions of people in a learning process that leads from awareness to action on key issues in the media violence debate.

The learning methodology in materials developed by the Center for Media Literacy is based on the work of Brazilian educator Paolo Freire. It can be summarized as a four-step learning process: *Awareness*, *Analysis*, *Reflection* and *Action*. You'll usually find the steps identified at the beginning of each lesson plan as objectives.



In the *Awareness* step, participants begin to discover and articulate their own ideas and experiences about violence in the media. This offers them a chance to identify aspects of their everyday media lives that they may never have stopped to think about.

In the *Analysis* step, participants come to question the political, economic, social or cultural causes that make the media the way they are. This step is especially crucial in the issue of media violence because of the many interrelated aspects of the problem: the economics of the media industry, First Amendment concerns, the cultural breakdown of many family systems, etc. Without a clear grasp of how things got to be the way they are, we can't plan effective action for making changes for the future.

Reflection is the step in which we move beyond the media as we know them to how we want them to be. It requires that we recognize and consider the philosophical tenets, ethical values and democratic principles that we accept as guides for our lives, individually and collectively.

Finally, the *Action* step gives participants an opportunity to formulate constructive action ideas — ideas that will lead to personal changes in their own media choices and viewing habits, as well as working for change locally, nationally or globally. Each lesson concludes with some action step. Plus there are several sessions designed to engender brainstorming for ongoing personal or community actions.

Learning About Media by Making Media

Media production can complement the understanding people get from analyzing the media. By making media, we become better equipped to deconstruct the media presented to us by networks, newspaper chains, cable channels and film studios. Media production heightens our ability to understand the decision-making process that goes into making media messages.

If you're leading the sessions for a group of students, you may find that they already have opportunities for making media since many schools have journalism or media production classes. Some of your participants may own their own camcorders. Public access cable facilities and media art centers also offer workshops that enable community members to rent video equipment inexpensively and make their own video productions.

But while media production activities are instructive, they do not substitute for analytical work. The goal of media literacy education is not to become amateur producers but rather to engage the media in our lives. We do this by exploring media's impact upon our cultural, political and social worlds, questioning its messages and evaluating its techniques. This process empowers us to choose whether to accept or reject the values conveyed to us daily through the media.

Teaching Tips: Elementary School Level

This teacher's guide is designed to actively involve elementary students in a process of learning about the influence and impact of media today and especially about violence in the media. By experiencing the lessons and activities, the young people in your care will become more knowledgeable about media violence, its consequences and what they can do to reduce the impact of media violence they see or experience.

What Can Children Do?

Children are growing up in an increasingly violent world. As a result, childhood today is far different from what most adults experienced when they were growing up. Ultimately it is up to adults to address the root causes of crime and violence in our time. Indeed, it is the task of adulthood to organize society so that our children (who are our future) will be able to grow up safe, healthy and whole.

But children can be a powerful voice for prodding adults to make the world better. Witness their commitment to saving the environment, to ending hunger, to protecting animals. And who has not been reminded to fasten their seat belt by the insistent voice of a child already buckled up in the back seat!

Children cannot be expected to be totally self-governing in reducing their exposure to violent imagery, but by better understanding media's impact and exploring the connections between media images and their experience of the real world (violent or safe), they will learn to be more critical about what they watch or listen to. They can also become important agents for change among their peers and within their families.

Use and Time Requirements

As a "starter kit" on media and violence, *Beyond Blame / Elementary* was written primarily for use in an elementary school classroom — public, private or religious. The eight lessons could be held consecutively over eight days or once a week for eight weeks. Time required is 45-50 minutes.

But the lesson plans, because they are activity-based and student-centered, can be adapted by creative teachers and leaders for

a) community-based afterschool programs,
b) weekly religious instruction classes,
c) at-home instruction,
d) youth groups,
e) summer camp programs.

The lessons can also be expanded by incorporating other classroom-ready resources, such as peace education materials or conflict resolution programs. With all there is for children to learn about their world today, no published program on any topic can be totally comprehensive. Teachers are urged to expand or adapt the materials to the specific needs of their students — individually and as a group.

Preparing to Teach about Media Violence

Everything you need to know to teach *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media* can be found in this kit which contains:

1. Overview of the Issue of Media and Violence

The Overview unit is designed for self-learning, to focus a study group of teachers/leaders, to present at a faculty or team meeting or to present publicly to a parent or community group. In preparing to teach *Beyond Blame*, you should plan two to three hours to work through the Overview material by yourself or with colleagues in a group. The Overview will introduce you to the fundamentals of media literacy education and the key concepts about media and violence from scientific research and social analysis, as well as studies in mass media and communication.

Be prepared to be challenged! The issues are complex and there are no simple solutions. However if we are to resolve this issue and make the world safe for our children, we must get started — today!

2. Elementary Unit — Teacher's Guide B

The book you are holding is **Teacher's Guide B** and contains lesson plans, as well as reproducible worksheets for eight lessons for elementary age students in grades 4-5.

There is also a videotape marked "Video B," containing a series of video clips to use with the lesson plans. Each segment on the tape is clearly marked to correspond to a video "cue" mark in the appropriate lesson plan. Additional materials that may be needed are clearly identified at the beginning of each lesson.

It is in the home, however, that media literacy must ultimately take hold. Throughout the program, take-home worksheets help transfer classroom learning to the home. Students become carriers of media literacy principles to their parent(s), caregivers, siblings and friends.

3. Middle School Unit — Teacher's Guide C

Teacher's Guide C is for use in middle schools and junior high — grades 6, 7, 8 and 9. The lessons may have similar names and many of the worksheets are the same, but the lesson plans provide for more sophisticated learning objectives and a higher level of reasoning and analysis. Video C incorporates video clips that may be slightly more graphic than those included for Elementary students in Video B.

Teaching the Discovery Method

The purpose of this workshop is not to say to kids, "Violence is bad for you. You shouldn't watch that." The outcome of these activities will be limited if students do not develop an awareness of violent media and see its negative effects through *their own experience*.

The discovery method encourages students to look to each other as sources of information in addition to looking to the teacher. As you use this workshop, think of yourself as a co-learner along with your students. The activities will enable you to act more as a facilitator and less as a lecturer. Rather than telling the students what you want them to know, these activities will guide the students to discover the concepts and formulate values alongside their peers. This is especially important when teaching about media — after all, kids know a whole lot more about media than adults do!

Not all students see or use media in the same way. Not all students are watching violent media under the same circumstances. As the teacher, allow the students to teach you about their media relationships. Allow yourself to enter a young person's world of media.

Analysis, reasoning, critical thinking and evaluating are the essential skills of media literacy — not memorizing facts. Experienced teachers know these are best developed through group discussion, cooperative activities and team problem-solving. Whenever possible, arrange the students in a circle for group discussion, use small groups for completing worksheets and encourage a wide range of responses and conflicting opinions.

During group discussions, resist the temptation to judge programs or genres you think are too violent or to cast judgment on particularly offensive portrayals. As all teachers (and parents) know, kids hold a particular fascination with anything adults scorn. Instead, prompt the student to compare heroes, programs and genres with their own emerging standards and values.

If we believe that an appetite for violent entertainment is learned, then we can be confident that with patience and care, it can be unlearned.

Viewing the Video Clips

There are times when students are asked to analyze video clips of media that portray incidents of violence. Although this may raise concern among some parents that you are exposing students to unncessary media violence, as with any skill, students must have an opportunity to actually interact with the media in order to learn how to analyze it.

While every care was taken to use only the mildest portrayals of violence in the video clips for the elementary level, it is possible that some very few children may have been protected completely from scenes such as the ones included. Tragically, most children will have seen similar scenes — or worse — throughout their young lives. However, if you suspect any potential conflict with one or more parents over this issue, you may want to receive parental permission prior to implementing this curriculum unit.

There are also times when students will be asked to be alert for and/or analyze any media violence they may see or hear while not in school. Please note that the lessons in no way *require* them to seek out media violence or to tell their parent(s) they are supposed to watch violent media as homework. The goal of the take-home activities is, rather, to transfer in-class learning to their everyday viewing behavior. The homework is designed to help them identify media violence they may encounter in everyday life and put it in perspective using tools of critical thinking and analysis.

Clip Log for Video B - Elementary

B #1 Eight clips illustrating each of the four types of media violence.

B #2 Six clips illustrating acts of violence shown without their logical consequences.

B #3 A violent animated scene to be compared with a written narration of the identical scenario.

B #4 Six clips illustrating the use of bright colors, many cuts, and loud sounds or music.

B #5 *Silence the Violence*, an MTV spot (recorded twice).

B #6 A clip from the film *Witness* illustrating violence escalating from name-calling to a fist fight.

B #7 A 2-minute clip from the cartoon *X-Men* to be used for identifying and counting violent acts.

NOTE:

As you become familiar with the instructional objectives, you may wish to substitute different or more timely clips that you collect from your own TV viewing. Or students may bring you clips for analysis. Feel free to build your own collection.

It is strongly recommended that you use a TV/VCR system with a remote control that has a pause button. Use it to stop and start the clips or rewind as needed to show again. And keep the lights in the room on!

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ELEMENTARY LESSON

1

What *Are* You Watching!?

Concept: The purpose of this activity is to alert students to the prevalence of violence in the media and to the four types of violence commonly portrayed in the media. Students will be encouraged to consider reasons for the preponderance of these types of images in all types of media.

Objectives:
- To identify various types of media.
- To name the types of media students use in and out of school.
- To view video clips and identify four types of media violence.
- To attempt to answer the question, " Why is there so much media violence?"

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media are constructed.
- Media use identifiable techniques.

Skills Development:
- Language development
- Categorization

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read: "View from the Network: What Counts As Violence?" (p. 15).
- Write introductory questions on board, chart paper or overhead.
- Duplicate one copy of Worksheet #1, **Types of Media Violence,** for each student.
- Prepare the following chart of types of violence on overhead, flipchart or blackboard. Cover it for use later in the lesson.
  1. *Violence with a weapon*
  2. *Violence without a weapon*
  3. *Crashes and explosions*
  4. *Verbal violence*
- Set up VCR and monitor. Cue tape to Video B #1 – a montage of eight clips illustrating each of the four types of media violence as listed above.

INSTRUCTIONS

Write questions: Write key words on board, chart paper or overhead:

What do chairs, tables, and bookshelves have in common?
What do trains, cars, and trucks have in common?
What do TV, videos, movies, and video games have in common?

Discussion: Allow students to contribute a variety of responses to each question. Many different responses should be considered correct.

Chairs, tables, and bookshelves are all part of a group called *furniture*.

Trains, cars, and trucks are all part of a group called *transportation*.

Explain that TV, videos, movies, and video games are *tools for communication*. They send messages with sound, moving pictures, and/or words. They are all called *media*.

Ask students to think of more examples of media. If necessary prompt students with hints: think of a tool for communication that uses printed words and still photographs.

Add student examples to list on board:

As students contribute examples of media, add them to the list on the board. Help them understand that books, magazines and newspapers are also considered media and referred to as *print media*. TV videos, movies, and video games are called *electronic media*.

Ask students which media they use most often at home, in school, or after school.

Uncover or display the following chart:

Display chart:

Types of Violence

1. *Violence with a weapon*
2. *Violence without a weapon*
3. *Crashes and explosions*
4. *Verbal violence*

Explain that today's lesson is part one of an eight-part series of lessons that will get the class thinking about experiences with these types of violence that are often shown in all kinds of media. Today they'll have a chance to identify these types of violence in the media *they* use.

Discuss categories:

Clarify and discuss the four categories. Encourage the students to think of examples of the different types of violence. (See Worksheet #1, **Types of Media Violence,** for examples you can use to start the discussion.)

Prepare to show the students the eight video clips of violence in the media. Ask students to signal when they recognize an example of any of these types of violence they've just discussed. Point out that often they may see more than one type of violence in one scene.

Video B #1:

Show the first clip from Video B #1. (Hands will go up rapidly.) Stop after the first clip and give the students a chance to discuss their observations. Sometimes there is so much going on in a single scene that you may need to show the same clip several times so the students can identify the different types of violence. Continue to show the clips, one by one, followed by discussion to reinforce recognition of the various types of violence.

Discussion:

Ask students which kinds of media show these types of violence? For example:

- *Which media often show crashes and explosions?*
- *Do you see/hear yelling and screaming more often on the radio or on TV?*
- *What kinds of programs are the most violent?*
- *Which medium is the most violent?*

Summarize:

Conclude the lesson by asking students why they think there is so much violence portrayed on TV, in the movies, and in other forms of media. Ask them if they or anyone they know is concerned about the amount and types of violence seen in the media.

Worksheet #1:

Distribute Worksheet #1, **Types of Media Violence**. Suggest that students take home the handout and the next time they are watching TV or using other media use it to identify the four types of media violence. Encourage them to show it to their parent(s), siblings or friends and let everyone help find the kinds of violence and fill in the chart.

ELEMENTARY LESSON

2

What's Missing From Media Violence?

Concept: Media rarely portray the consequences of violence in a realistic light. Students will recognize that media often glamorize, glorify or eliminate the logical consequences of violent portrayals. The students will compare what they know about real-life consequences with the media portrayals in several video clips.

Objective:
- To name the missing consequences from violent media portrayals.
- To brainstorm the real-life consequences of six violent scenarios shown in the video clips.
- To compare real-life consequences with those commonly seen in media portrayals.

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media construct reality.
- Media use identifiable techniques.

Skills Development:
- Language development
- Cause and effect
- Creative thinking

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "Suggestions for Parents: Children Can Unlearn Violence" (p. 19).
  "How to Analyze the Media for Violence" (p. 21).
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read:
  "Media Must Tell the Truth About Violence" (p. 6).
- Write introductory questions on the blackboard, chart paper or overhead.
- Prepare a chart with consequence questions on the blackboard, chart paper or overhead.
- Prepare the following handouts:
  Worksheet #2, **What's Missing from Media Violence?** (One copy cut into strips — one strip for each group. Each strip matches a scene in Video Segment #2.)
  Worksheet #3, **Consequences of Violence.** (One or two copies for each working group or make into poster or overhead transparency.)
  Worksheet #4, **Look Out For What's Missing!** (One copy for each student.)
- Set up VCR and monitor, and cue tape to Video B #2 — Six clips illustrating violence acts shown without their logical consequences.

INSTRUCTIONS

Introduce scenarios: Read the following scenarios out loud:

A glass of juice spills on a white tablecloth. What happens next?

You're speeding down a hill on your bike when suddenly someone walks right in front of you. What happens next?

Discussion: Ask the students to imagine what happens next in each case. Encourage students to think far into the future to imagine the long-term effects of each event and to generate a wide range of

responses. Prompt the students by asking who will wash the tablecloth. Will the stain come out? Will the tablecloth have to be replaced? How much will it cost?

Explain that what happens as a result of any event are called *consequences*.

Explain that the objective of today's activity is to discover exactly what is missing from much of the violence in the media. Students will use what they know from real life to re-write the consequences of some of the violent acts that they see on TV, in the movies and in video games.

Form six small groups:

Divide students into six small groups. Assign each group a number from one to six. Distribute the correct strip from Worksheet #2, **What's Missing from Media Violence?** to each group. Explain that the strip describes one scene on the video. Their group is assigned to that scene. Be sure everyone can comfortably see the monitor and be able to work within their groups.

Video B #2:

Play Video B #2. (You may want to play all six scenes a second time.) After showing the video scenes, ask the students to work in their groups to write as many possible consequences for the violent act described on the strip. Again, invite them to think far into the future and to be as specific as possible. Encourage them to consider effects such as anxiety, nervousness and how so-called innocent bystanders might be affected.

Groups consider consequences:
(15-20 mins.)

To guide their work, use the following questions (Worksheet #3, **Consequences of Violence**. Display on an overhead projector or handout one or two copies for each working group):

- *Who will be sad?*
- *Who will cry?*
- *Who will pay for the damage?*
- *Who will clean away the mess?*
- *Who will fix everything that was broken? How much will it cost?*
- *Who will have to go to the hospital? How long will they have to wait to be seen by a doctor?*
- *How long will they stay in the hospital?*
- *How will this affect their families? Who will be left alone?*
- *How will this affect the other people in the neighborhood?*
- *Who will be scared to go outside?*
- *If someone dies, who will attend the funeral? Who will pay the bills from the funeral?*

Allow 15-20 minutes for the groups to generate ideas and write them down. Go from group to group to offer advice and guidance.

Explain that after students write the real-life endings, each group will take a turn sharing their ideas. Ask each group to choose one person to speak for the group.

Groups report:

Call on the representative from each group to explain all the consequences the group could think of for the scene they were working on. Reinforce in your comments that most of the violence seen on TV and in other media does not show real-life consequences. Real-life consequences are what would *really* happen in real life as a result of a certain event or action.

Summarize:

Summarize that the students' real-life experiences should tell them that what they see in the media is not always accurate, especially in the case of violence.

Worksheet #4 to take home:

Encourage students to take home Worksheet #4, **Look Out for What's Missing!** and ask their family and friends to help them think of all the things that would happen in real life. Suggest that as they are watching TV, movies, or playing video games they should search for more examples of media violence that leave out the real-life consequences.

ELEMENTARY LESSON

3

Why is Everyone Watching?

Concept: Cartoon violence is not entertaining in itself. Rather, it relies on basic elements such as loud noises, bright colors and quick cuts to attract young viewers' attention. These elements combine to create "jolts" that attract the viewer and keep him/her waiting for the next jolt. This exercise will give students an opportunity to identify those elements.

Objective:
- To identify action, quick cuts, bright colors and loud music as elements used in TV/movie violence to attract and hold the audience.

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media use a special "language" to construct messages.
- Media have commercial implications.

Skills Development:
- Communication skills
- Analytical skills
- Observation/listening skills

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "Strung Out On Aggression" and "Measuring Jolts per Minute" (pp. 6-7).
- Duplicate one copy of each of the following worksheets for each student:
  Worksheet #5, **Quick Media Violence Survey,**
  Worksheet #6, **Why is Everyone Watching?**
- Set up VCR and monitor. Cue tape to Video B #3 — A violent, animated scene that matches narration.

INSTRUCTIONS

Read narration: Read the following short passage. Use effective dramatic techniques in telling the story.

A 1-year old baby peers up from below a huge refrigerator. He looks way, way up to the top and sees an enormous jar of cookies. He wants those cookies! He decides to crawl up to the kitchen counter to get them. In the other room, the baby-sitter notices the crib is empty! He looks into the kitchen and sees the baby crawling across the stove, lighting the burners with his foot as he goes. The baby-sitter's eyes pop straight out of his head, he screams, "I'll save you baaabby!!!" and he runs as fast as he can into the kitchen. Before he can reach the baby, he slips on a rolling pin that the baby has kicked onto the floor. He screams again even louder, rolls around and around the kitchen trying to catch his balance and when the baby accidentally knocks a large teapot off the counter and onto his head, he rolls right into the open oven just as the baby's foot has turned the stove up to volcano heat!

Video B #3: After you've finished reading the passage, show Video B #3.

Worksheet #5: Distribute Worksheet #5, **Quick Media Violence Survey.** Ask the students to compare their responses to each version by using the survey. Ask students to partner with three people in the room. Then using the survey, students are to interview each other and write the answers on the worksheet. Allow about 10 minutes for the groups to complete their surveys.

Discussion :

Ask students to share the results of the survey:

- *Which version was the most popular?*
- *Which version was more exciting?*
- *Which version was more violent?*
- *Why do people watch?*

Allow many ideas to come forth about why kids watch. (What is it that is exciting about violent media? How does it make them feel?)

Display chart:

Display the following elements on the board, chart paper or overhead:

- *Quick changes from scene to scene (quick cuts)*
- *Bright colors*
- *Loud music and sound effects*

Discussion:

Explain that the people who create cartoons and other shows, too, do everything they can to get you to watch their shows. Why? So you'll be there when the commercials come on! Say something like, "One of their tricks is to use violence to tell the stories. Violence is used because it is an easy and popular way to create shows that kids and adults will watch. Violent scenes are created by using lots of loud noise or music, bright colors and lots of fast movement. These elements attract viewers like you and me and keep us watching so we'll be right there when it's time for a commercial."

Explain that the objective of this lesson is to learn to spot the basic elements used to grab audience attention.

Worksheet #6:

Prepare the students to watch several video clips and to look for the three basic elements that help get their attention. Distribute Worksheet # 6, **Why is Everyone Watching?**

Students will identify "cuts" and "shots." Explain that each time the camera changes position or there is an instant change from one shot to another it is called a "cut." For example, first you might see a monster's face, then you'll see a big castle, and then the monster's face again. That's three different cuts.

Video B #4:

Show the first two clips from Video B #4 – six clips: two each that illustrate, 1) quick cuts, 2) bright colors and 3) loud sound and music. Ask the students to count the number of cuts as they watch each scene. You may want to show the two scenes several times to give the students a chance to spot all the cuts. Ask the students to record their responses on the worksheet.

Students will identify bright colors. Tell the students to look for bright colors in another pair of scenes. Show the next two scenes with the sound turned all the way down so the students can concentrate on the colors and action only. Ask the students to describe on the worksheet the colors they see. You may want to show the clips several times to allow students to generate responses.

Students will identify loud music and sound effects. Explain that you will show the next two scenes with the picture turned black so the students will notice only the sound track. If you can't turn the visual down, cover the TV screen with a larger piece of dark paper. Point out that often the music gets louder and louder as the violence escalates. Ask students to describe the sounds they hear on the worksheet.

Discussion:

Ask students to think of shows, movies or other types of media that use these elements to get their attention.

Then, explain that movies and TV shows can be loud, noisy and have lots of cuts *without* showing violence.

For example, ask the students to think of activities that are loud, active, entertaining *and* nonviolent. Contribute examples like riding roller coasters, birthday parties, playing basketball, swimming, theme parks, carnivals, etc.

Offer MTV as another example. Although not all music videos are nonviolent, many of the MTV spots are *very* entertaining, use loud music and sounds, bright colors, and many, many cuts, all without violence.

Tell students that, in fact, MTV once showed a 15-second spot called *Silence the Violence*. In the spot, marching machine guns turned into flowers.

Video B #5:

Show the Video B #5. Ask students to look again for the three elements. (This clip goes by *very* fast. It is on the tape twice; the second time in slow motion. Stop after the first showing to discuss. Or let the tape run so students can examine it more closely in slow motion, then discuss.)

Summarize:

Finally, summarize by explaining that by learning to identify the elements that attract our attention, we can begin to understand how violence is made to be entertaining.

Ask the students to take home the worksheet and challenge their friends and family to find bright colors, loud music and lots of cuts in the shows they watch. Are the shows they watch violent or nonviolent?

ELEMENTARY LESSON

4

Violence Doesn't Solve Problems, It Causes Them

Concept: Much of the violence portrayed in the media can be characterized as gratuitous — that is, an unnecessary addition to a scene or scenes. In this lesson, students recognize how formulas often used in media create cycles of unnecessary violence as a result of uncontrolled anger. The lesson will challenge students to create nonviolent and entertaining endings to scenes that commonly culminate in violence.

Objectives:
- To identify uncontrolled anger as a possible catalyst for violent outcomes.
- To brainstorm possible outcomes to a potentially violent scenario.

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media construct reality.
- Media contain ideologies and value messages.

Skills Development:
- Cooperative learning
- Problem solving
- Conflict resolution

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read:
  "Media Must Tell the Truth About Violence" (p. 8),
  "Anger Management Skills Can Help Media Create Positive Role Models" (p. 9).
- Duplicate one copy of each of the following worksheets for each student:
  Worksheet #7, **The Cycle of Violence,**
  Worksheet #8, **Breaking the Cycle of Violence.**
- Set up VCR and monitor. Cue VCR to Video B #6 — A clip illustrating violence escalating from name-calling to a fist fight..

INSTRUCTIONS

Create chart: Create a chart with two columns on chalkboard or tablet. Write **VIOLENCE** over the first column. Ask the students to brainstorm as many words, ideas or images as possible for the word "violence."

Students brainstorm: Allow the students as much time as they need to generate a broad range of responses. Write each suggestion in the column without reacting. It's likely that the students will be quite elaborate -- most have had considerable exposure to the images of violence.

Next, write **NONVIOLENCE** on the other side of the chart. Again, ask students to come up with as many words, ideas, images as possible. Encourage the students to think of a list comparable to the "violence" list. After only a few moments, it will be clear that the students have much less to say about nonviolence.

Discussion: Once they have exhausted their nonviolence possibilities ask:

Why are there so many words for violence and so few for nonviolence?

Clarify their responses by explaining that today there are lots and lots of violent acts on TV, in movies and in other media. But there are far fewer examples of nonviolence or peacefulness in most media.

The objective of the first part of this lesson is to see how violence creates problems instead of solving them. In the second half, the objective will be to brainstorm ways everyone can learn to solve problems without violence.

Start by looking at what happens to anger in a typical scene from a TV show or movie.

Ask: *What do you do when you are really angry? Really, really angry? Does your anger ever get out of control?*

Video B #6: Watch what happens in this video clip, when anger gets out of control. Show Video B #6.

Discussion: Ask what these characters did because they let their anger get out of control.

- *Why are they fighting?*
- *What do they want?*
- *Who started the fight?*
- *Why did the fight continue?*
- *What do you think would happen if we kept watching?*
- *Why? If one of the characters gets killed, what do you think his family will do?*
- *Does any of this violence solve the original problem?*

In this case, how is violence creating problems instead of solving them?

Explain that often what we see in the media is a cycle of violence. That means, instead of solving the problem, each violent act leads to another one, then another and then even more. The characters become more and more violent until someone is very badly hurt or even killed.

Worksheet #7: Distribute Worksheet #7, **The Cycle of Violence,** and ask students to look at the picture of the cycle of violence. Encourage them to think about how this cycle is mimicked in video games where the more you play, the better you get and the more violent the game becomes.

Discussion: Also, the characters, no matter how violent they are acting, think what they are doing is justified because of what the other character has just done to them. Each time one character insults the other, the other character feels justified in shouting an even stronger insult. When one character hits, the other character pulls out a knife or a gun. Eventually, someone gets hurt, maybe even dies. Then, when the family or friends find out that someone they know has been killed, they, too, become angry and their anger can also lead to more violence. In this way, the violence goes on and on and on.

Ask the students, if they were in charge of creating TV programs or movies, what would their characters do to break this cycle of violence? Ask what can be done to show people like you and me more examples of peaceful, nonviolent ways to solve problems.

Form small groups: Explain that they will now get a chance to create their own ending to a scene where characters are about to let anger get out of control. Ask students to join together in small groups of 4 -5.

Worksheet #8: Distribute Worksheet #8, **Breaking the Cycle of Violence.**

Then, ask the students to look at Worksheet #8. There, in the center circle, they will read the opening scene to a movie where one character has threatened another. Using the two sample ideas in the bubbles, the students will create three more conclusions to the scenes that do not use violence.

Students fill in worksheet: *(10-15 min.)*

Allow groups 10-15 minutes to complete the worksheet. Invite each group to share their solutions aloud to the rest of the class.

Summarize:

Summarize that the cycle of violence so often used in TV programs and movies can be stopped and more and more people can learn to **really** solve problems — **without** violence.

Homework:

Homework: Ask students to notice the kinds of problems presented on TV and in movies. Pick one and challenge themselves and their family to solve the problems nonviolently.

ELEMENTARY LESSON

5

How Much Violence Do You Watch?

Concept: Most students are unaware of how much TV they watch in a week. In this lesson students assess their own viewing habits and/or the viewing habits of their friends and families. Using statistics that identify the number of violent acts typically found in certain programming, students will recognize the relationship between their own media habits and their exposure to violent images and themes.

Objectives:
- To estimate the number of hours students spend watching TV each week.
- To expose students to statistics on TV use in the United States.
- To familiarize students with the number of violent acts found in popular TV shows and movies.
- To estimate the number of violent acts students will see as a result of their own viewing habits.

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media construct reality.

Skills Development:
- Basic Math

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media & Violence: Part One*, read:
  "Growing Up Violent" (p.8),
  "A Tale of Three Countries" (p.12).
- Distribute one copy of each worksheet for each student:
  Worksheet # 9, **Viewing Habits Tally,**
  Worksheet # 10, **Adding It Up.**
- Set up VCR and monitor. Cue tape to Video B #7—a 2-minute clip from the cartoon *X-Men* to be used for identifying and counting violent acts.
- Write the following statistics on the board, chart paper or overhead. Cover it. Reveal this information only *after* the students have filled in their chart of media use.

TV Use in The United States
- In 1993, 93,000,000 homes had TV sets.
- 1/3, or more than 33,000,000 homes have 3 or more TV sets.

[Nielsen Media Research Report on Television]

- Prepare **Which Media Do You Use?** chart on chalkboard, newsprint pages or chart paper.
- **OPTIONAL**: Show Video A #7 — "Shaggy Dog Commercial" from Video A in the *Introduction/Overveiw* package.

Additional Materials Needed:
- VCR and monitor
- Videotape
- *TV Guide* (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Write following chart:

On the board, display a chart like the following. Or write each category at the top of one piece of newsprint. Post newsprint pages around the room. (Students need to be able to write their names below the categories.)

Which Media Do You Use?

CD's	Video Movies	Video Games	TV	Radio	News-papers	Magazines

Students fill in chart:

Invite each student to approach the chart and write his/her name under the medium they think they use the most.

Assuming that most youngsters use TV, videos or video games, tell the students the results of the survey would probably be the same the across the country: most kids prefer TV or videos. TV is by far the most popular of all media.

Display statistics:

Display the statistics on TV use that you've covered up. Ask students to read the statistics out loud.

Explain that most people are not aware how much TV they watch or how many violent acts they see each day. Explain that the purpose of today's activity is to find out just how much TV violence they watch each day.

Worksheet #9

Distribute Worksheet #9, **Viewing Habits Tally.** Ask students to complete the worksheet and calculate the number of hours they spend watching TV.

Discussion:

When the students have finished, ask: *Were you surprised how much TV you usually watch? Was it more or less than you expected? How do you think your TV watching compares with that of your friends and your family?*

Next, ask students to consider which types of shows or programs on TV they think are the most violent? Accept many responses.

Then, tell students that cartoons are considered to be the most violent programming of all. Tell the students they can prove it for themselves by counting the violent acts in a short cartoon segment.

First, encourage the students to think back to the first lesson and remember the four kinds of TV violence. Display the four types of violence:

1. *Violence with a weapon*
2. *Violence without a weapon*
3. *Explosions and crashes*
4. *Verbal violence*

Tell the students they will be watching a two-minute clip from a cartoon. Ask them first, to guess the number of violent acts they think will appear during the segment. Record a few of their estimates on the board.

Video B#7:

Explain that to test their estimates, they will count out loud every time they see an example of one of these types of violence. Show Video B #7 — a two-minute cartoon with lots of violence for identifying and counting.

Discussion:

Compare the students' predictions with their actual count. Ask if they were surprised by the amount of violence in the cartoon.

Calculate acts of violence:

Explain that now each person, working alone or in pairs, will use the information they gathered on the first worksheet to figure out how many acts of violence they usually see in a day.

Worksheet #10:

Distribute Worksheet # 10, **Adding It Up.** Read instructions out loud and check for understanding.

While the groups are working, encourage students to help one another come up with the formulas necessary to compute the number of hours they spend watching TV and the number of violent acts they are likely to see during that time.

Emphasize that there are many shows on TV that are *not* violent and depending on what they watch, they might not see much violence at all.

Students fill in worksheet:
(15-20 mins.)

Allow about 15-20 minutes for students to complete the worksheet. After, gather groups together to discuss and share the results.

- *What do you think the effects of so much violence may have on your friends and family?*
- *Your little brothers and sisters?*
- *Do you think it has an effect on you?*
- *Do you notice anything in yourself after watching something that is violent?*
- *How do you feel?*

Summarize:

Summarize that many people are concerned about the amount of violence kids and adults see in the media. In the next lesson, we'll learn about the possible effects of so much TV violence. Encourage the students to take home more charts to share with family and friends.

OPTIONAL SUMMARY:

Cue Video A #7 — "Shaggy Dog" commercial. Brainstorm with students ways to "watch television sensibly." Create a poster to hang on the TV at home.

ELEMENTARY LESSON

6

What's the Big Deal? Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence

Concept: Many studies indicate that media violence has adverse effects on society. This lesson will introduce students to the four effects of viewing media violence and identify behaviors in themselves, their friends and families that may result from these effects.

Objectives:
- To interview each other concerning their thoughts and feelings about media violence.
- To identify the four effects of viewing media violence.
- To share examples from their own lives to illustrate the four effects and how they affect behavior.

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media contain ideologies and value messages.

Skills Development:
- Analysis
- Language development
- Cooperative learning
- Writing skills

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "Growing Up Violent" (p. 8),
  "A Tale of Three Countries" (p. 12),
  "No Doubt About It — TV Violence Affects Behavior" (p. 14).
- Duplicate one copy of each of the following worksheets for each student:
  Worksheet #11, **Acting Aggressively,**
  Worksheet #12, **Being More Scared of the Outside World,**
  Worksheet #13, **Being Less Willing to Help Someone In Trouble,**
  Worksheet #14, **Desire for More and More Media Violence,**
  Worksheet #15, **Interview Someone Your Own Age/Older Than You.**
- Listen to the audio tape for a discussion on the four effects of viewing media violence.

INSTRUCTIONS

Write student responses on board: Ask the students to call out words that describe how they think and feel about violence they may have experienced in real life. Record their responses on the board without comment. (Depending on the neighborhood your students come from, their stories could be very graphic. Be alert to students who might be troubled by this experience and handle accordingly.)

Discussion: Then, ask the students to call out words that describe how they feel about violence on TV. Again, refrain from commenting. Simply record their responses alongside the first list.

Ask students to compare the two lists. Are they different? The same? Why? Why not?

If the students describe the two types of violence as more or less the same, explain that violence, whether it is real or make-believe, can have negative effects on the community.

If the students describe TV violence as being entertaining or fun, explain that although many people are entertained by TV violence and find it fun and exciting, there are many concerns about the effects that media violence may have on individuals, as well as on communities.

Emphasize that many people who study media violence have found that it can affect families even though the people watching may think it's entertaining and know the difference between real and make-believe.

Write effects:

Write these effects on the board:

- *Acting aggressively*
- *Being more scared of the outside world*
- *Being less willing to help someone else in trouble*
- *Desire for more and more media violence*

Discussion:

Psychologists have discovered that watching a lot of violent TV, movies or video games can have one or all of these effects. Indicate the four effects written on the board and offer the examples cited on the worksheets.

For example, one of the effects of violence is being less willing to help someone else in trouble. I knew a woman who saw someone who was shot but she kept on driving. She said later that she figured somebody else would call the police. (Or use your own example.)

Explain that today's lesson will give the students a chance to find out how violent media has affected them, a friend or a family member.

Form four groups: Assign code letters and concepts:

Break into groups of four and assign each member of the group a code letter W, X, Y or Z. (The code letters will be used later. To help them remember, students may want to write their letter on a small piece of paper.) Assign each team one of the four effects:

- *Acting aggressively*
- *Being more scared of the outside world*
- *Being less willing to help someone else in trouble*
- *Desire for more and more media violence*

Worksheets #11-#14:

There are four different Worksheets for this activity (#11 through #14). Distribute four copies of the appropriate worksheet to each group. Ask each team member to write his/her code letter at the top of the paper.

Explain that each group has a worksheet that describes one example of how violence on TV and other violent media can affect the community. Ask the students to remember a time when they themselves or someone they know was affected by TV or media violence in a way similar to that described on their worksheet. Each team member should write the experiences in the spaces provided on each worksheet. Go around to each group offering assistance.

Groups jigsaw:

After each group has three or four examples, ask them to jigsaw: everyone with the letter W will get together to form a new group, everyone with the letter X will also make a new group, and so on. Remind the students that they will need the information written on their worksheet and to take it with them to their new group.

In the new groups each team member will represent a different possible effect of TV violence and will read or explain the examples written on his/her worksheet.

Group responses: After students have shared their experiences in the new groups, encourage volunteers to share their stories with the entire class.

Summarize: Summarize by noting that the increasing violence in today's media has a serious impact on our communities. Inform students that the next lesson will give them the opportunity to explore possible solutions to this problem.

Worksheet #15: Encourage students to take home one copy each of Worksheet #15, **Interview Someone Your Own Age/Older Than You,** and interview two people, one their own age and another much older. Bring the results of the interview back for the next lesson.

ELEMENTARY LESSON

7

What Makes a "True" Hero?

Concept: Children are seduced into idolizing characters and personalities who use violence to carry out so-called heroic acts. This lesson is designed to encourage students to hold media heroes up to their own standards of "true" heroism.

Objectives:
- To describe the behaviors and attitudes of students' media heroes, both real-life and fictional..
- To create a personal definition of a "true" hero.
- To compare media heroes with the students' own definition of a "true" hero.

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media construct reality.
- Media contain ideologies and value messages.

Skills Development:
- Analysis
- Problem-solving
- Vocabulary development

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read: "New Heroes for a New Age" (p. 7).
- Duplicate a copy of the Worksheet #16, **Describe Your Heroes**, (2-sided) for each student.
- Prepare at least 50 index cards with an adjective written on each (see Worksheet #16). Have plenty of blank cards.
- Prepare chart of discussion questions on blackboard, chart paper or overhead. (optional)

Additional Materials Needed:
- Masking tape
- Index cards
- Dictionary

INSTRUCTIONS

Review interview questionnaire: Ask students to share the results of their interview questionnaires with a partner. Then, in a large group, ask students if they noticed any similarities among the responses. Ask students to share a few answers to question six.

Students call out examples: Ask students to call out names of TV or movie characters they admire. Display their lists in a long chart. Be willing to accept all the students' responses. If initially they have trouble thinking of a variety of examples, offer the following names to get started:

Kelly Bundy *on "Married...with Children"*		Blossom *on "Blossom"*	
Mighty Morphin Power Rangers		*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*	
Superman	*Arnold Schwarzenegger*	*Lois Lane*	*Aladdin*
Bart Simpson	*Magic Johnson*	*Batman*	*The Mask*

Adjective cards:

Randomly hand each student several adjective cards and ask them to tape the cards under heroes that fit that description. Students may not be familiar with the words written on their cards. Encourage them to discuss the meaning of the word with others. Students who think of their own adjectives may write the word or words on blank cards.

Discuss media heroes:

After all the cards have been placed below the names, ask students to compare the various responses to each character or personality. Did everyone describe the characters the same way? Why are some characters described with both positive and negative adjectives? Ask students to further describe two or three of the characters. For example, ask, "What is it about_____ that makes him/her_____?"

Next, explain that the objective of today's lesson is to get to know these and other media heroes better. We will then create our own definition of a hero and compare it with the heroes we see on TV.

Initiate a discussion about heroes using the following questions and the list of heroes as a guide:

- *What kind of friends would these heroes be?*
- *What would your parents think if you brought any of these heroes home for dinner?*
- *What would you think if these heroes sat next to you in school?*
- *How would you feel having these heroes as part of your family?*
- *What would police officers think of these heroes if they met them in real life?*
- *Why are most of these heroes men? Can women be heroes, too? Do these heroes act like any people you know?*

Discuss standards for "true" heroes:

The purpose of the discussion is to challenge the heroic status children commonly attribute to different TV and movie personalities. The students will probably discover many conflicting feelings about their TV heroes. Withhold your own opinions about the characters and allow the students to engage in critical thought on their own.

After students have had a chance to explore the above issues, focus the discussion on their own standards of heroism. Use the following discussion questions as a guide:

- *What is it that makes a "true" hero?*
- *Are heroes always strong?*
- *Is it okay for a hero to use violence?*
- *Do "true" heroes hit first? Do they hit back?*
- *Would a "true" hero hit someone weaker than her if she were hit first?*
- *Do "true" heroes try to stop fights? Do they try to prevent fights?*
- *Do "true" heroes stop fights by beating up or killing the ones you are fighting?*
- *Would a "true" hero do anything for a good cause or to protect the people he loves?*
- *Are there any limits to what a hero would do to protect people?*
- *Does a "true" hero give up everything in life for something he/she believes in?*
- *Can cartoon characters be "true" heroes?*
- *What would a hero never do?*
- *Is a hero someone who only does heroic deeds?*

Again, withhold judgment, allowing the students to formulate their own criteria at their own speed. During these discussions, challenge the students to establish standards for "true" heroes.

After several minutes, ask the students to choose from the words on the board and the worksheet to make their own definition of a "true" hero on the lines provided on the worksheet. Students less comfortable with writing can draw their hero.

Worksheet #16:

Distribute Worksheet #16, **Describe Your Heroes.**

Students write own definitions:

After students have written their own definitions, ask them to look back at the list of heroes written on the board. How do those heroes compare with the students' definitions? Ask the students to think of other TV or media heroes that better fit their definitions. Depending on the students' definitions of heroes, it may be difficult to think of "true" TV heroes.

Discussion:

In the large group, initiate a discussion of real-life heroes. Use the following as a guide:

- *Remember a time when someone you know did something heroic.*
- *Remember a time when someone from your family or neighborhood acted as a hero.*
- *Think of someone you see everyday that is a hero.*
- *Think of women or girls that have been heroes.*

Encourage students to share these experiences.

Summarize:

Summarize by explaining that at first, we may think characters we see on TV and in movies are our only heroes. Once we discover what it means to be a "true" hero, we may find more heroes in our real life.

Worksheet #16 to take home:

Ask students to use the take-home worksheet to compare their definition of a hero with actions of characters they see on TV. Do the characters fit their definition of a "true" hero? Yes or No?

ELEMENTARY LESSON

8

Sharing What You Have Learned

Concept: The purpose of this lesson is to encourage students to recognize their role in sharing the information learned during the previous lessons. The students will choose three ways they can bring this knowledge to their friends and family. As part of the lesson, teachers and students are encouraged to delve deeper into the topics of media violence and nonviolent solutions through class and schoolwide projects.

Objectives:
- To choose three specific activities students can do at home to share what they have learned about media violence.
- To complete at least one project to express their opinions regarding violence portrayed in the media.

Skills Development:
- Communication skills

Teacher Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read:
  "20 Ways to Create a Caring Culture" (p.16),
  "Taking A Stand: A Postcard Campaign for Nonviolent Media" (p. 23).
- Duplicate one copy of Worksheet #17, **Where Do We Go From Here?** for each student.

INSTRUCTIONS

Students offer examples of solutions:

Ask students to remember and share a time when they participated in a small or big way to make the world a better place. (Consider writing letters, recycling, anti-smoking projects or environmental awareness activities.)

Explain that once you learn the details about a problem facing your family or community, anyone can use what they know to teach others and find solutions together.

Explain that they will have a chance to decide what they can do at home tonight to share what they have learned about media violence and how it affects everybody — kids and adults.

Worksheet #17:

Distribute Worksheet #17, **Where Do We Go From Here?**

After students decide what they'll do at home, invite them to chose among the in-class activities provided below or you may prefer to assign one or more projects.

Discussion:

To build even more enthusiasm for the knowledge they have gained, engage the class, school and community in one or more of the large-scale projects. These projects will help attract schoolwide attention to the issue of media violence and also promote nonviolence. The activities place nonviolence in center stage as a viable, desirable and heroic alternative to the more prevalent use of violence to solve problems.

Short term projects:

Short term projects to do in class:

- Students can re-write and replay "action" scenes by taking different points of view.
- Students compile lists of nonviolent programs or videos and publicize the list throughout the school and the community.
- Interview neighbors and/or family members about heroic actions they have done or seen.
- Identify the nonviolent student of the month. Students can take responsibility for determining who should receive the honor.
- Prepare a presentation that explains the four effects of viewing media violence. Offer the presentation to other classes, adults and/or community groups.
- Work in small groups to develop alternative strategies for resolving conflict. Present solutions in the form of a dramatic play, video, photo essay, short story or other creative means.
- Interview community members and ask about their thoughts and feelings concerning media violence. Publish the results in a class newsletter.
- Write letters to friends or family members to explain core concepts learned about media violence.
- Write letters to the local newspapers to express your concerns.
- Make a collage of nonviolent images.
- Create posters to explain your concerns about violence in the media.
- Develop a collage of photographs or drawings of heroes that use nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution or are heroic in other ways.
- Write a brief biography of a nonviolent hero. Get ideas from television, movies, the library, interviews, textbooks and class discussions.

Large scale projects:

Large-scale projects that may develop into a long-term unit that can involve the whole school:

- Create your own nonviolent video shows.
  Imagine you are a TV producer. What would you do about the problem of TV violence?
  Learn how to use a video camera.
  Contact a local video arts center or cable access center for assistance.
  Create school-wide contests for nonviolent scripts.

- Write a movie or TV review that covers the real-life consequences of violent actions in the production. The headline might read: "THOUSANDS DIE IN TERMINATOR II."

- Organize a parade to celebrate nonviolent heroes in real life.
  Contact the media.
  Ask a local business or community group to sponsor the event.
  Design a colorful ribbon to represent the school's commitment toward nonviolent media.

- Start a nonviolence club.
  Make banners, posters, stickers or buttons with nonviolent slogans.
  Create "peacemaker awards" and sponsor an awards ceremony to honor students, staff or faculty that have contributed to a nonviolent school climate.

- Develop "hero cards."
  The class should research different heroes throughout history. One side of the card will contain a freehand drawing, photocopy or tracing of the hero. The other side would include pertinent information such as date of birth, birthplace, date of death, significant accomplishments, etc. The finished portrait and biography can be "pasted up" onto standardized templates, printed on cardstock and "traded." (This idea came from Mark Gura, Project Director, Division of Instruction and Professional Development, New York City Public Schools.)

Ready-to-Copy Worksheet Masters

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LESSONS

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To accompany Lesson One:
- *#1 - Types of Media Violence*

To accompany Lesson Two:
- *#2 - What's Missing From TV Violence?*
- *#3 - Consequences of Violence*
- *#4 - Look Out For What's Missing on TV*

To accompany Lesson Three:
- *#5 - Quick Violence Survey*
- *#6 - Why is Everybody Watching?*

To accompany Lesson Four:
- *#7 - The Cycle of Violence*
- *#8 - Breaking the Cycle of Violence*

To accompany Lesson Five:
- *#9 - Viewing Habits Tally*
- *#10 - Adding It Up*

To accompany Lesson Six:
- *#11 - Acting Aggressively*
- *#12 - More Scared of the Outside World*
- *#13 - Less Willing to Help to Help Someone in Trouble*
- *#14 - Desire for More and More Media Violence*
- *#15 - Interview Someone Your Own Age/Older Than You*

To accompany Lesson Seven:
- *#16 - Describe Your Heroes*

To accompany Lesson Eight:
- *#17 - Where Do We Go From Here?*

B **WORKSHEET #1**

NAME:	Movies & Videos	Music	Television	Video Games	Books & Comic Books
Violence with a Weapon (knives, guns, sharp or heavy objects) *Example: Someone gets shot. Two characters get into a fight.*					
Violence without a Weapon (hitting, pushing, punching) *Example: A person gets pushed in front of a speeding car or train.*					
Crashes and Explosions *Example: A building blows up or two cars crash.*					
Verbal Violence (threatening, yelling, name calling) *Example: Someone says, "Give me the money or I'll kill you."*					

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B **WORKSHEET #2**

What's Missing from Media Violence?

Cut each description into strips. Each team will receive one strip.

A police car chase ends up in a 5-car pile-up.

A young boy watches as his father beats up a man standing at a bar.

A blow torch is aimed directly at a man's head. He screams and walks into the living room.

A man is shot in the arm by a passing gunman. He sits up and complains about his dirtied suit.

A man is shot in the back from across the street. He falls to the ground. The neighbors cheer.

A man beats up another man and then walks back to his car. People on the street watch.

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B WORKSHEET #3

Consequences of Violence

Use the following questions to find out the consequences of violence you see on TV, in movies, videos, video games, *MTV*, comic books or other violent entertainment.

1. Who will be sad?

2. Who will cry?

3. Who will pay for the damage?

4. Who will clean away the mess?

5. Who will fix everything that was broken? How much will it cost?

6. Who will have to go to the hospital? How long will they have to wait to be seen by a doctor?

7. How long will they stay in the hospital?

8. How will this affect their families? Who will be left alone?

9. How will this affect the other people in the neighborhood?

10. Who will be scared to go outside?

11. If someone dies, who will attend the funeral? Who will pay the bills from the funeral?

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B **WORKSHEET #4**

Look Out for What's Missing!

Use what you know from your life to describe what would happen **in real life** in the following situations. Ask others to help you, too.

NAME: _____

...when people are shot, they run away or shoot back.

In Real Life... _____

_____

_____

...several cars crash, then explode. No one ever goes back to the scene to remove the smashed car.

In Real Life... _____

_____

_____

...people who die are never mentioned again. They almost seem to disappear.

In Real Life... _____

_____

_____

...injured people are rushed to the hospital where they are treated immediately in the emergency room.

In Real Life... _____

_____

_____

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B WORKSHEET #5

Quick Media Violence Survey

Interview three people in the room using the following questions.

Your Name: _____

	#1 _____	#2 _____	#3 _____
1 Which version did you like the best? Why?			
2 Which version was more exciting?			
3 Which version was more violent? Why?			
4 Why do you think so many kids watch cartoons and live-action violence?			

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B **WORKSHEET #6**

Why is Everyone Watching?

Quick Cuts

Scene #1

Scene #2

Bright Colors

Scene #1

Scene #2

Loud Music and Sound Effects

Scene #1

Scene #2

AT HOME: Challenge your friends and family to find quick cuts, bright colors and loud music in the shows they watch. Are the shows violent or nonviolent?

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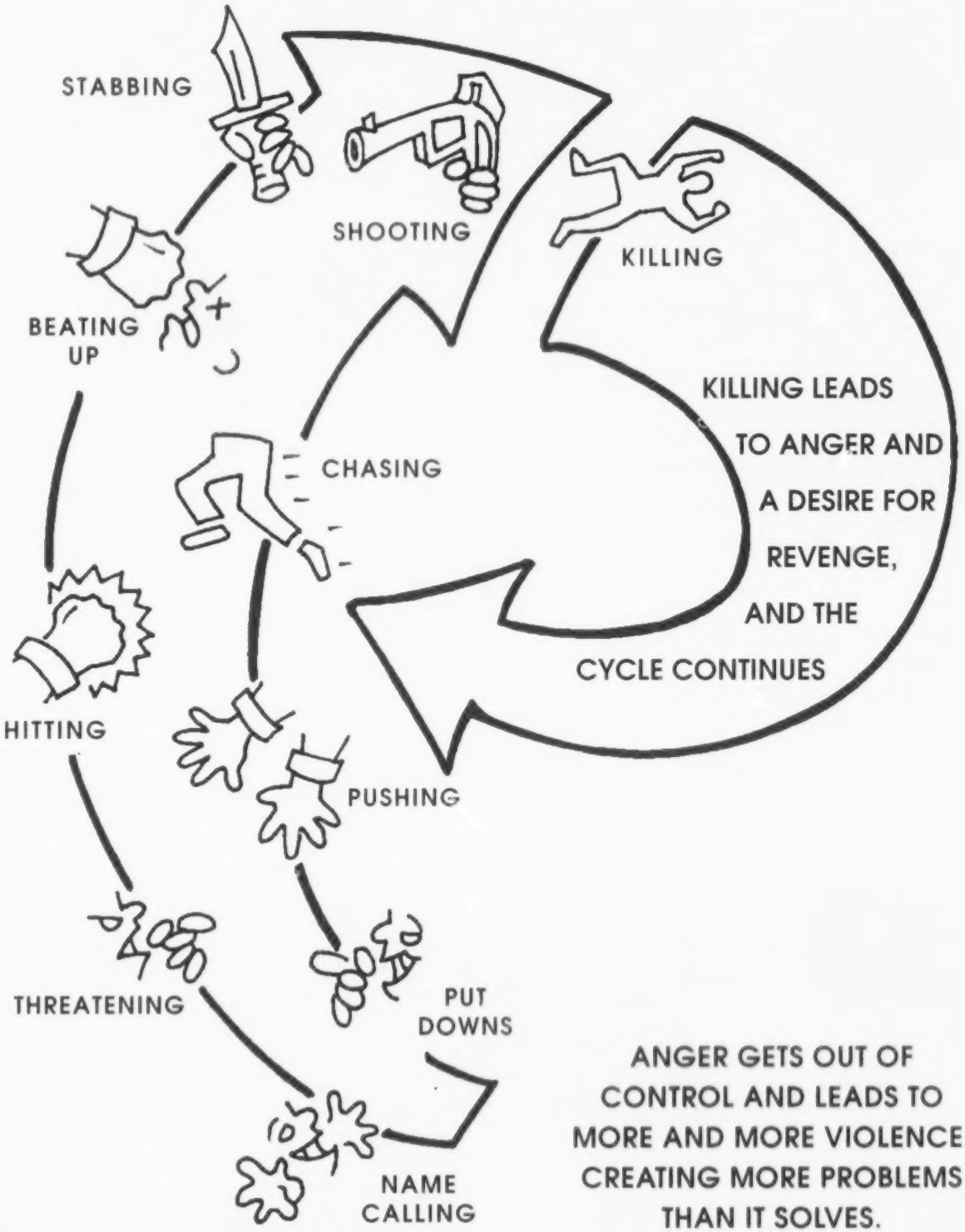
B WORKSHEET #7

The Cycle of Violence



ANGER GETS OUT OF CONTROL AND LEADS TO MORE AND MORE VIOLENCE, CREATING MORE PROBLEMS THAN IT SOLVES.

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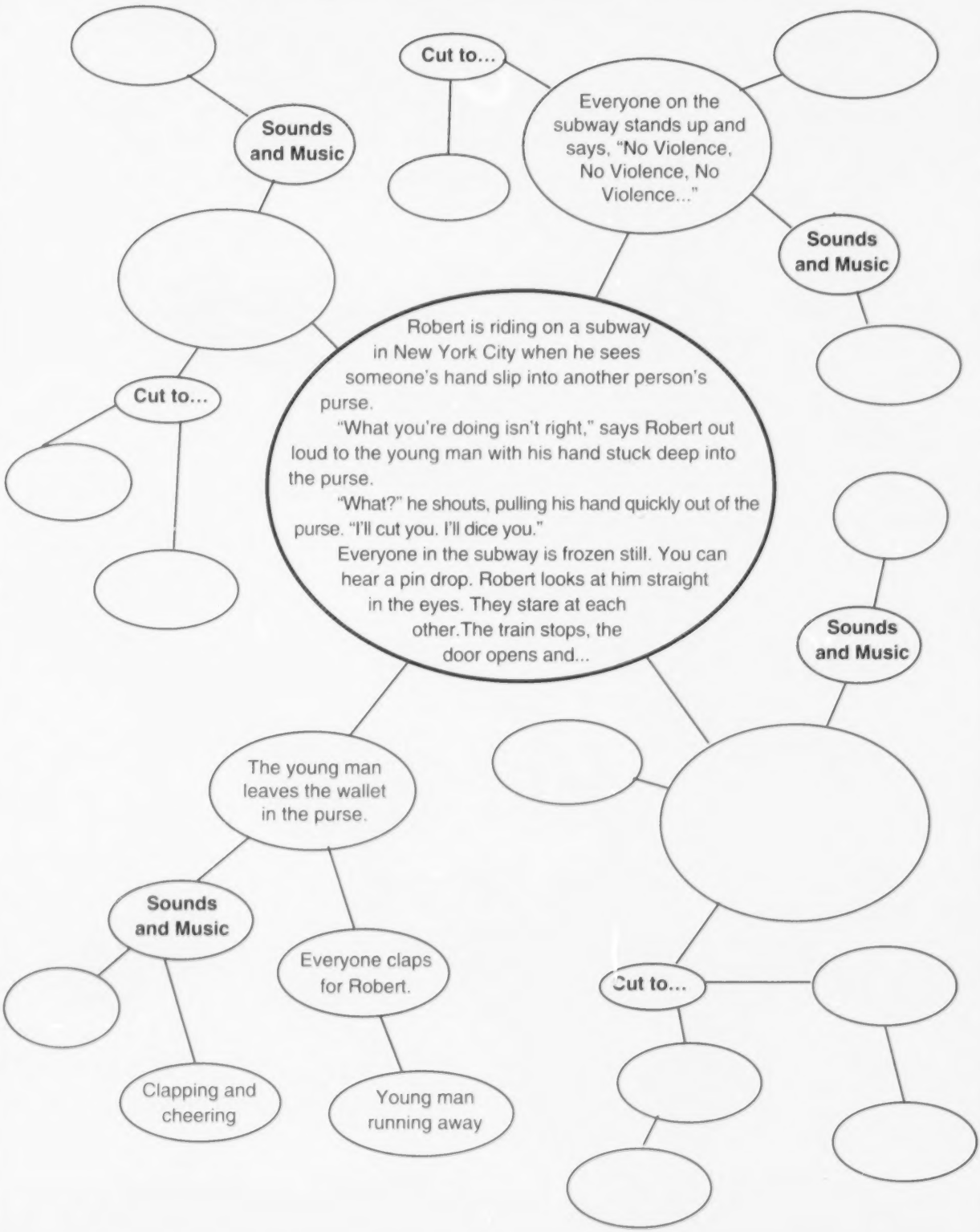
B WORKSHEET #8

Breaking the Cycle of Violence


Cut to...
Everyone on the subway stands up and says, "No Violence, No Violence, No Violence..."
Sounds and Music
Sounds and Music
Robert is riding on a subway in New York City when he sees someone's hand slip into another person's purse.
"What you're doing isn't right," says Robert out loud to the young man with his hand stuck deep into the purse.
"What?" he shouts, pulling his hand quickly out of the purse. "I'll cut you. I'll dice you."
Everyone in the subway is frozen still. You can hear a pin drop. Robert looks at him straight in the eyes. They stare at each other.The train stops, the door opens and...
Cut to...
Sounds and Music
The young man leaves the wallet in the purse.
Everyone claps for Robert.
Sounds and Music
Clapping and cheering
Young man running away
Cut to...

B **WORKSHEET #9**

Viewing Habits Tally

Check the times of day you usually watch TV. Fill in the number of hours for that time of day as shown in the chart. Add up the total number of hours you watch each week and weekend.

✔	WEEKDAYS		
	Before School	1 hour x 5 =	
	After School	3 hours x 5 =	
	During Dinner	1 hour x 5 =	
	After Dinner (8-11 pm)	3 hours x 5 =	
	Late Night (or in bed)	2 hours x 5 =	
	Never	0	
		TOTAL	

✔	WEEKENDS		
	Morning Cartoons	2 hours x 2 =	
	Afternoons	3 hours x 2 =	
	Evenings (7-11 pm)	3 hours x 2 =	
	At Night (or in bed)	2 hours x 2 =	
	All Day	7 hours x 2 =	
	Never	0	
		TOTAL	

Weekday Total [ ] + Weekend Total [ ] = [ ] Total Hours Watching TV Each Week

What is the total number of hours you watch TV a month? a year? _____

If your TV watching habits stay the same, how much will you have watched by the time you graduate from high school? _____

What time of day do you usually watch TV? _____

Name the shows you usually watch. Circle the ones you think are violent.

_____ _____ _____ _____

If you never watch TV, what are other types of media you use? How many hours a week?

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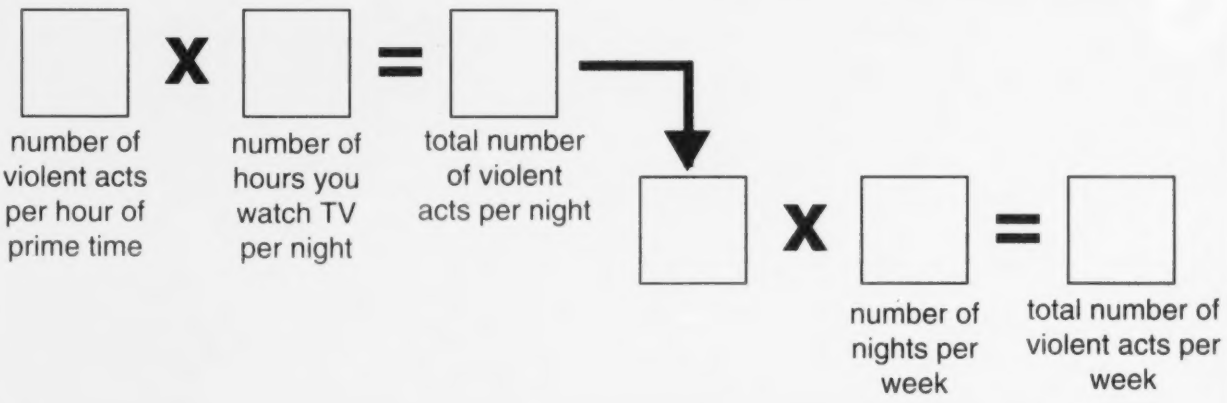
B **WORKSHEET #10**

Adding It Up


x
=
number of violent acts per hour of prime time
number of hours you watch TV per night
total number of violent acts per night
x
=
number of nights per week
total number of violent acts per week

1. Cartoons like *GI Joe*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *Batman*, usually have at least 25 violent acts every hour. **How many violent acts would you see if you watched these cartoons every day before and after school?** _____

2. Prime time is Monday through Saturday from 8-11 p.m. and Sunday evening from 7- 11 p.m. If there are five acts of violence each hour during prime time, how many acts of violence would you see a week if you watched violent programs every weeknight during prime time? _____

3. Between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m., 25 violent acts were counted each hour. **If you watched one hour of violent TV every morning before school, how many violent acts would you see a week.** _____

4. Cable shows are often more violent than network shows. HBO programs showed 15 violent acts per hour. MTV showed 13 violent acts per hour. WTBS showed 19 violent acts per hour. **If you usually watch one of these cable channels on Saturday night, how much violence would you see?** _____

5. The movie *Total Recall* showed 74 acts of violence on screen. *Robocop* had 81 acts of violence. *Die Hard II* showed 264 acts of violence. **How many acts of violence might you see if you watched *Total Recall* and *Robocop* on video after you watched violent programming on Saturday night?** _____

6. **Use the chart on Worksheet #9 to estimate how many hours a day you use video games, either at home or in arcades.** How many acts of violence do you see in one hour of video-game playing? _____

(Source: **Growing Up Violent, Decades of Research Link Screen Mayhem With Increase in Aggressive Behavior,** David S. Barry, *Media&Values* Magazine, no. 62 and **The American Psychological Association**)

B **WORKSHEET #11**

Acting Aggressively

Media violence makes some people who watch it act more aggressively.

EXAMPLES:

- *After seeing* Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, *my little brother goes out to play and does "ninja chops" at his friends.*
- *Some kids at school act like tough characters in the movies by bringing knives to school.*

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Being More Scared of The Outside World

People who watch a lot of media violence can think their communities are more dangerous than they really are.

EXAMPLES:

- *My older sister, who watches a lot of gory movies, doesn't trust anyone who is walking by on the sidewalk.*
- *My aunt and uncle are afraid to drive at night because they might get carjacked.*

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B **WORKSHEET #13**

Being Less Willing to Help Someone in Trouble

People see so much crime and violence on TV that they pay little attention to real-life people who are in trouble.

EXAMPLE:

- *One of my friends fell down some steps and we thought he'd get up and chase us like they do on TV. We ran away. Later we found out he was really hurt and had to go to the hospital.*
- *I know a woman who saw someone who was shot but she kept on driving. She said later that she figured somebody else would call the police.*

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B **WORKSHEET #14**

Desire for More and More Media Violence

Viewers get used to watching a lot of media violence and want to see more and more in order to be entertained.

EXAMPLES:

- *You hear two kids talking about their favorite videos. One kid says, "I only like movies with killing. If there's no fighting, then I don't want to watch."*
- *My sister loves video games. The better she plays, the higher the level she goes and the more violent the games get.*

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B **WORKSHEET #15**

Interview Someone Your Own Age

Name:

1. How old are you? How many years have you been watching TV? What are your favorite programs?

2. Do you think kids should be allowed to watch any shows or movies they want?

3. Why do you think so many TV programs show people getting hurt?

4. Why are some people scared by TV violence, and other people think it's entertaining?

5. How do you think TV violence affects your family? Your school? Your neighborhood?

6. How do you think TV violence affects children in this country? Around the world?

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Interview Someone Older Than You

Name:

1. How old are you? How many years have you been watching TV? What are your favorite programs?

2. Why do you think so many TV programs show people getting hurt?

3. Why are some people scared by TV violence, and other people think it's entertaining?

4. Why do you think some people, especially young children, have trouble telling the difference between real and make-believe violence?

5. How has violence on TV and in the movies changed since you were a kid?

6. How do you think TV violence affects children in this country? Around the world?

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B WORKSHEET #16

Describe Your Heroes

Circle the words you think describe a "true" hero.

kills people
strong
mean
tough
pretty
hits people
ferocious
uses weapons
wants revenge
trusts people
leads people
speaks out
likes to fight
tells lies
patient

cares about people
listens
talks with people
caring
confident
honest
trustworthy
fair
polite
generous
always tells the truth
humble
explains how they feel

needs his group
dangerous
courageous
show-off
yells a lot
acts tough
brave
thoughtful
selfish
avoids fights
threatens people
smart
handsome
thinks before speaking

WRITE YOUR OWN DEFINITION OF A HERO:

For me, a hero is a person who... _____

_____

_____

55

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B **Worksheet #16 Cont.**

Tonight, or the next time you watch TV or videos, compare the characters or personailities with your definition of a hero. Ask yourself, "Is he/she a "true" hero? Explain why or why not on the lines below.

NAME OF A CHARACTER: _____

Are they a "true" hero? **YES** **NO** (circle one)

Why or why not? _____

_____

_____

_____

NAME OF A CHARACTER: _____

Are they a "true" hero? **YES** **NO** (circle one)

Why or why not? _____

_____

_____

_____

NAME OF A CHARACTER: _____

Are they a "true" hero? **YES** **NO** (circle one)

Why or why not? _____

_____

_____

_____

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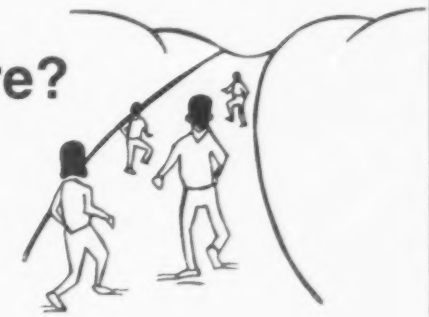
B **WORKSHEET #17**

Where Do We Go From Here?



Circle 3 things you could do tonight to help your family understand more about media violence:

Tonight I Will...

...write a letter or call a grandparent and ask them how much TV they watch and tell them what I'm learning about violence on TV.

...watch a cartoon with my younger sister, brother or other relative and help them see what's fake.

...tell my mom and/or my dad about the different types of media violence.

...watch TV with my family and tell them about the real-life consequences to the violence we see.

...rent a nonviolent movie and watch it together with my family.

...look in the TV listing and underline all the nonviolent shows.

...make a list of nonviolent heroes I know.

...talk with my younger brothers and sisters about the violence they see in cartoons.

...record a nonviolent show to watch again another day.

...think of nonviolent ways to solve problems I see on TV and in videos.

...with my family, count the number of violent acts in our favorite shows.

...make a list of all the things I like to do besides watch TV.

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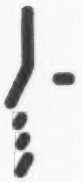

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As the nation's leading producer and distributor of media literacy materials, the Center is committed to creating a new view of literacy for the 21st Century — one that encourages critical thinking about the powerful images, words and sounds that comprise our mass media culture.

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